THE UNITARIAN

AUGUST, 1909

A MAGAZINE OF DEFINITE PROGRESS AND VIRILE OPTIMISM IN RELIGION

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THE UNITARIAN.

Vol. IV (New Series.) AUGUST, 1909 No. 8

THE Isles of Shoals Summer Sunday School Institute, which has just closed its second season has certainly given good evidence that it has come to stay. The enrollment of membership was something over a hundred and while this number included some who simply availed themselves of the reduced rates without intention of attending many of the meetings, the actual attendance was always good and the interest vital. Every body in attendance will doubtless prove a good missionary for next year's meeting Of course the attendance might be very much larger, if all our Sunday schools and churches realized the value of these sessions and took pains to have their workers present. It is hoped that next year the program can be announced earlier in the Spring, and a more energetic campaign of publicity urged to bring the matter before our people.

———o———

THE Isles of Shoals Summer meetings this year were as usual very successful, both for the quality of the program and the delightful good fellowship of those attending. It is a pity that every year is shadowed by a fear lest a change of ownership of the Islands should snatch from us this unique opportunity of religious inspiration and denominational *esprit de corps*. We understand that a very small sum of money could purchase this property and secure it permanently in the control of our people: while its exceptional attractiveness as a place for Summer meetings, Institutes, Chautauquas, and similar gatherings, could make it, in the hands of judicious managers a financial enterprise of assured success. How fortunate it would be if such a thing could be brought about! Of course it is not a matter of denominational patronage, or purely benevolent investment: but of individual initiative on a sound and self responsible business basis. But in the hands of a right sort of private corporation it could, we believe prove a wise business investment and at the same time a large denominational religious advantage. Of course when we say *denominational* from a Unitarian point of view, we inevitably include vital undenominational uses as well.

———o———

THERE has been no braver, or more heroic and self-sacrificing laborer for the cause of liberal religion and better humanity, in our ranks than Jasper Douthit. Indeed, there has been a picturesque element of devotion in his long service which has made for him staunch and eager friends. We are all sorry that the dream of his soul, the maintenance of the Lithia Springs Chatauqua, has fallen to ruins and that he, himself is suffering keenest disappointment as well as personal em-

barrassment through its failure. We are also sorry that injudicious friends have been permitted to publish in his behalf a bitterly unjust arraignment of the Unitarian body and the American Unitarian Association, as responsible for his failure. The fact is, of course, that many people who have believed very much in Jasper Douthit have believed rather little in his Lithia Springs project, and that while a good deal of denominational money has been generously put into it,it is now impossible to persuade people to put more into it. Reviewing the case impartially, we cannot discover that resolutions passed by either the National Conference or the American Unitarian Association have been of the sort pledging money unreservedly for the realization of Mr. Douthit's dream; and the American Unitarian Association certainly under it's moral responsibility as an administrator of trust funds must use its business sagacity as well as its humanitarian sympathies in the distribution of its resources. But there's not a man or a woman acquainted with the story of Mr. Douthit's service who will remain content to have hardship or personal privation of any sort fall on him or his devoted family.

———o———

WE hail as a real step of progress in a most vital religious concern, the publication of the new series of Sunday School manuals by our Sunday School Society, on the basis of a well devised and carefully worked out graded course system. It is a splendidly serious endeavor to bring our Sunday School work in line with modern ideals of education: and opens a new era in our Sunday school work. Doubtless some of the manuals will fall short of the ideal; there will be partial failures in exact accomplishment. But the *direction* of the venture is progress-tending; and a vast deal of credit is due to the committee having this matter in charge.

———o———

UNDER the auspices of the Publicity Department of the American Unitarian Association, as we understand, an interesting campaign of summer missionary work suggesting somewhat the English "Van Mission",though without the van, is now being worked out in the New England states, under the energetic direction of Mr. Casson. We present the details of this work in another column, but are glad here to express our hearty sense of delight that such a venture is to be pursued under so good and adequate auspices. It is certainly another evidence that the American Unitarian Association is not content simply with doing old things respectably, or maintaining ancient traditions steadfastly, but has the courage of new ideas and original experimentations.

———o———

WE are glad to read a vigorous statement of progress from the new organization of the "Unitarian Laymen's League": but we shall be very much disappointed if this body does not recognize in its official title the fellowship of our Canadian Churches, and the more than National scope of our liberal cause. Why not an "American League" rather than a "National League". The relation between our Canadian Churches and thoses in the "States" is most intimate and vital. Our work is growing in Canada, and our churches there are peculiarly strong in the interest of laymen. Why treat these churches as incidental appendages merely of our American Unitarian work, rather than as integral factors in a movement not easily divisable by national lines?

My Creed

By CHARLES E. ST. JOHN

I BELIEVE in man, and find it natural to begin the statement of my belief with the thing nearest at hand and most familiar. An ancient catechism states that the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. I shall presently try to show, as best I can, how profoundly we in the Unitarian church glorify God, and what joy we find in the thought of Him and in communion with Him; but, as we see it, it is not the chief end of man to have that magnificent joy, however deep it goes into life, and however important we find it. The chief end, the first and final end of man, is to live the good life, based upon a fine self-reliance, upon a knowledge of human nature as God has made it. We take up human nature as it comes to us, and develop it to high and holy expressions.

So belief in man must precede all other beliefs and may, to many, constitute a sufficient religion, if they gain no vision of any other truth. It is a good religion, the belief in human nature, the belief in the soul and its powers and expressions.

I believe in human experience; and, as I read about it, meditate upon it, and go through it myself in the presence of my companions, I find that human nature has created human experience by process of putting forth all the powers that are within it; and that from time immemorial, this human soul has been finding out things and expressing the truths that it has discovered, setting forth in conduct and in speech the great convictions that have grown out of the search after truth.

Our religion, everyone's religion, is an effort to express certain of the results of human experience. We have struggled on and on, as our forefathers did, trying to find out the meaning of life, to build up better conditions, to get better ideals, and to bring forth the better things that shall come after the imperfections of today. So we have discovered, out of our human experience, the moral law. We have discovered certain regulations by which men must control their lives. What the mind of ancient man has found to be right, we have today, adding our judgment to the experience of the olden time, declared to be eternal in its binding force upon us. The moral law was not thrust down upon us from above; but springing out of human experience, it has become basal force of human existence, an ultimate thing in which we must believe.

Mankind, struggling onward, seeking after truer and truer conceptions and wider and wider expressions of these conceptions of truth, has been building religion after religion. In this way, mankind has put forth a Bible, which remains to-day the loveliest expression of human experience. That book, made holy by the right habits and experience of our fathers, came not to us out of the unknown, not as a command from on high: but was rounded out of human lives. It is the expression of the experience of mankind, grand, noble, and permanent,—though it is true that in the midst of passages of permanent value there are pages and even books that are but the expressions of a time that is gone, and mean comparatively little to us today. We, in our turn, must flash forth the holy pages that are to inspire the generations to come. The record of truth has never been closed; it is being written by human experience to this day; and men will go on forever, uttering their grand thoughts, expressing their holy visions, and making consecrated pages that generations to come shall look upon with the same high reverence that we feel for the expressions set forth in the Holy Bible.

Jesus has come to us, not miraculously from on high, not from a world apart from our world; but as an expression of the yearning of mankind. Men, through ages past, had been seeking after God,

had been trying to express the glory of their visions of the Eternal One. At last, mankind expressed itself on this wonderful theme. The name of this expression of the experience of the ages is Jesus. All that we find in him is an expression by the human soul of the power that has come to mankind through the fifty thousand years of experience and of the expression of experience—those years wherein, generation after generation, the child has learned from the father, to believe the holy visions of life. Through Jesus we come to God, but that means simply that at last mankind has found God; at last, by the very stress of the search that has gone on so long, the cloud has been drawn aside and all barriers thrown down, and the soul has become great enough to see the deep meaning of life.

All these discoveries of truth that man has come to express from the experience of the ages have a reverse side; they are, besides being discoveries, revelations from a being greater than ourselves. Whatever man has found out was true in the Eternal Mind before man began to seek. There is no satisfactory explanation of the beginning of our lives and the progress of this search after truth, no explanation of the fact that men have found ideals so grand as to have been able to write a Holy Book, save that the truth existed in the Eternal Mind before we began to seek.

I believe in God with all my heart and mind and strength and soul, as the one great, irresistible power back of the beginnings of all things physical. I believe in God, and see in Him the power which, through the illimitable ages, has been expressing itself in these wonderful works that we call natural things, in the development of that great law of the universe concerning which modern science has taught us so much under the high name of evolution. Evolution, this comprehensive, simple, and philosophic explanation of all existing things, is an expression of the experience of mankind, on one side; but on the reverse side, an explanation of God, and of His search for creatures that, at last, shall be able to comprehend and love Him. I think of God as the mind which has expressed itself through many millions of years in turning matter into shape after shape, and has at last—in one instance, at least—set in the universe a foundation of wonderful life. I believe that life on this earth came out of the thinking of the Almighty Creator. How did it go on to higher and higher forms and greater, sweeter beauty, save through the thinking of the Almighty? The law of cause and effect is nothing but the presence of the mind of God.

I believe in God so completely and so magnificently that I refuse to recognize any power that can stand in opposition to Him. All things that have been and are, are expressions of the mind of God, not of a devil opposed to God. They are expressions of His effort to carry on a progressive creation. He might perhaps have made a perfect and changeless world; but all that we have to do to-day is to recognize the fact that He has made a changing, progressive world. God might have made man perfect at the start and suffered him to fall away from that state of perfection; but He did not do so. Instead, He followed this wonderful path of the steady expression of His developing thought, whereby man began at the lowest of all possible stages that could be looked upon as possessed of a soul, and went on and on in an upward direction, until at last the creatures that now inspire us by their revelations of moral power and religious inspiration were brought forth as the result of the thinking of the perfect Creator.

A growing world, I firmly believe, is a more satisfying world than one changelessly and miraculously perfect from the start. A growing world inspires the men that live in it, helps us to make growth come to pass in our earthly career, and so assists us to understand that in this expression of God which we are privileged to study there is no place for an evil power opposed to God—and no place anywhere from the beginning of time to this moment, for a miracle. There is never need for reconsideration in the thinking of the Almighty, which must needs be perfect; no call that God should

withdraw His influence from what He has done, or change His perfect plans and methods. It is not by miracle, not by constant interference in the endeavor to rescue the world from an unfortunate and unforeseen condition, that our God has wrought; but by the perfect method of growth under the natural expression of a mind like our own, save that it is infinite, following processes so orderly that the modern man of science can study them as laws of nature.

I believe in this world. I believe in making of our religion what the New Testament writers called glad tidings. I believe in holding doctrines that, when uttered,shall inspire the minds that listen to give heed; and, so now and for all time to come, I gladly put out of my thought any conviction of the olden time that has ceased to bring kindness and joy to my heart or is difficult to adjust to my conceptions of the love of God, the greatness and power of God, or the wonderful possibilities of the human soul, which is the child of God, created in the image of God. I believe in taking one world at a time, and in rejoicing in this world, the most nearly perfect produced up to this moment; and the necessary preparation for the lovelier things to come.

I believe in the joy of work, and try to preach unto men that they should take delight in the things that they have to do in the commonest toil,—delight that shall help the carpenter to rejoice in laying every board straight and true; that shall help the ship-builder to rejoice in making the ship strong to face the waves of the sea. I believe in that kind of joy which comes to the scholar when he faces his lessons with a sense of the dignity of attacking something hard and sticking to it until the object is achieved.

I believe in this world as giving opportunity to every soul born into it to win the things fundamentally important in life. But, you say, "How about evil? how about temptation? how about sorrow, of which the world is full? how about sin, which, more or less, affects everyone, and which affects many in so terrible a way as seemingly to cut off the joy and power of life and to threaten the very existence of the future? How about the grim things in life that men have attributed to an evil spirit? what are we to say about these things, which seem to challenge our confidence in the love of the perfect Creator?" In reply, I would say that we are to meet them by the dignity of our belief in human nature, and the grandeur of our belief in a world of progress and growth as a finer world than one made perfect and absolutely free from all difficulty and temptation. We have come to see that whoever would be good,really and magnificently good in the Christ-like way, must win, must create his own goodness. It cannot be given to him from on high. Whoever is simply born good has not even begun to be good. Goodness involves choice, and choice involves the chance of doing wrong. I do not know what truth is until I have faced a strong temptation to be untruthful, and seemingly gain something for myself by being so. No person knows what any virtue is until he has laid it side by side with the opposite wrong or evil and has chosen the good, by a free and unforced choice, as against the evil.

This world, including its temptations, its sorrows, is, to my mind, a wonderfully devised school for the building up of character. Would you like to be more patient? Would you like to have patience become in your soul a moral power and not simply a slumbering resource? would you like to have it really a grand thing in you? Behold! the world in which you live is testing your patience every moment; is demanding patience of you, under laws that show that whenever you grow impatient you go under. We have got to be patient in this world, or have no part in its better things. Would you like to have serene, lovely force of character, which shall make your face shine with moral power and cause your words to mean much to those who seek your companionship? Behold! This world, with its losses, its calamities, its reverses, its steady wrongs, is, to my mind, the best conceivable device for bringing forth in your soul just that kind of serenity of disposition which shall make you worth while to your fellow men and bring you near to God. This is

a magnificent school; and the sins are not put here by an evil spirit,nor are they put here by God, who has simply given us a school, an opportunity for improvement through the constant necessity resting on us to choose. In this school we make our mistakes, as our fathers did; we have often chosen the wrong, we have sinned, we have deliberately done what we ought not to do. The consequences of these sins, on through the ages, are terrible beyond expression, but, with all this, it is better so than for us not to win the power of righteousness which comes through this kind of battle, and could not come in any other way. We shall win to the end, which is righteousness, sometime and somewhere.

I believe with all my heart that we are immortal; and that everyone, from the instant of birth, is a being that cannot be killed or be checked in his progress which is inspired by all the ages that have gone before. If that be true, then we can study every life in the large, beyond the difficulties of a school-period, by a vision of the sure victory that at last will come to every child of God who passes,however successfully or unsuccessfully, through these short years of earth. The chief end of man is to find righteousness and to live by righteousness, to be good and to do good day by day; and the chief help that we have, as we try to obey this law, is the consciousness of the presence of our God. We can all have this consciousness of God as our helper. He speaks to us in the same ways as He spoke to the fathers. We can be as near to Him as were any of the prophets of the olden time—as was Jesus, the revealer of the nearness of God We can have this splendid support, as we struggle with the difficulties and dangers of earth.

In our progress, we must go slowly; for we must take the pace set by God. It has taken Him no one knows how many millions of years to bring earth up to its present state of beauty. The waves of God have beaten upon the beach that surrounds our Continent, we know not how many centuries. Each wave struck its blow, never to strike another; but the united work of waves on waves, throughout these centuries, did much to shape the continents, and will do much to reconstruct them throughout the years to come. Each one of our lives is a wave in the Sea of life. In our forty or eighty years, we strike our blows upon the conditions that seem imperfect; and then what? Is that our last blow? Are we no more than the waves of ocean that strike but once? A work for forty or eighty years, and then no more? Each must answer this question for himself. My answer is, No. I am more than a wave breaking upon the shore of the present life; I am a part of an immortal tide sweeping through the centuries. We are each one part of a great tide of human life that is to exist forever swelling right onward, until at last righteousness conquers everything evil and imperfect; until at last every soul chooses right always and in the face of the possibility of choosing wrong, and goes on forever, gladly doing right—caring always for that which is generous and beautiful and perfect, turning its back always upon that which tends merely to selfishness and evil.

Opportunity has no end. I believe that with all my heart. Opportunity is never going to have an end for us. It will never come to an end for any man born into the world of God. Opportunity cannot be blotted out by conditions, present or to come; for it is given to us of God, who loves us and gives it as His grandest gift. The gift of life is a good thing; the gift of this world is a great thing, though not completely satisfying; but the gift of opportunity is the one thing to which there comes no end.

So, on forever and forever the children of God go. This law applies to all. I dare not say that anyone of my fellow men has lost his chance forever. I cannot presume to say that anyone of my brothers is so much worse a man than I that he has lost his last chance. To think that would vitiate my belief in the justice of God; and I should have nothing to rest upon, if I could not rely upon eternal justice. The possibility of moral progress lies, at least in germ, in every soul.

Do I need to say that hell has but a limited place in this system of belief? Hell

is a mistake. Whoever chooses wrong, when he might choose right, has thrust himself into hell and the tortures thereof; and he cannot get out until he has changed his course and corrected the mistakes that he has made. He cannot get out through the sacrifice of any soul, nor by the arbitrary decree of God. He can get out only by his own choice, by his seizing of the opportunity that God has put in hell just as freely as in heaven. How long will the most wicked man of earth stay in the hell that he has thus built? I do not know how many ages of the life after death it will take him to get out; I only know that he will win his way out when, at last, his character asserts itself, when he has served his just time, when he has paid his utmost debt, when he has taken upon himself the burden of the sad results of his sins and has thanked God for the opportunity to do so, when he has thus faced all consequences and has marched forth again in the straight and narrow way that leads to the companionship of the faithful and the larger vision of God.

What is Heaven? Why, we have it to-day, and may be just as conscious of it now as after we have died and forgotten these physical bodies of ours. Heaven is righteousness, doing right for the joy of doing it, with no thought for the reward to come. Heaven is moral power. Heaven is putting forth righteousness by our own initiative, as fellow-workers with God, some marching forward in the fellowship of Jesus Christ, and some in other fellowships. Heaven limited to those who happen to have heard of Jesus Christ! Oh, no. Heaven is love; Heaven is morality; Heaven is the vision of God. Heaven is round about us now. Heaven is the realm which we are to live in after our bodies are worn out; for we shall choose more constantly the law of right, we shall more completely understand our God and His will and ways.

So, living in Heaven now, and fighting against hell now, I, for one, stand facing my future convinced that it is endless; that after a while I shall more and more choose right, instead of evil, and win the joy that comes from the right using of life. I stand facing my future with a heart that I believe to be absolutely fearless. I do not fear God; that expression was a product of the ages that are gone. Whenever I hear the word fear in reference to God, I always want to substitute the word revere. I love God and try to understand Him; but can the child fear a loving father? Can one who has come to understand the will of God fear Him or imagine that God would do anything cruel or harsh or unhelpful to any of his children? I face my death without fear, I believe; though one never knows that, until he stands at the threshold of death. I do not fear punishment for any of my wrong-doings; I yearn for it, because I know that it will be the means of winning victories that I have not yet won. I fear not, because progress is given of God. I look forward reverently, happly striving day by day to live the helpful life, to make my motives more and more consecrated, more and more like what is revealed to me as I study the life of Jesus Christ.

Yet I am content, day by day, with the life that now is. I am not trying to win Heaven, to earn my entrance to what is to be; I am simply content, inspired by a knowledge that something shall be—inspired by faith in God, by a self-reliance that springs from my knowledge of human nature; content to take this one world at a time, this one day at a time; satisfied to get out of it what I can by my efforts and by comradeship with the people with whom I live.

Have I claimed too much, in claiming that every one of the articles of this creed inspire breadth of vision and nobleness of life? Find any link in the chain of argument that does not so inspire you, and you will have found something in which you ought not to believe. Some other church will preach a doctrine that will better reach your heart and inspire it. Point out any item that is inconsistent with the rest, and I will drop it; because I believe in the open mind, in progressive thought, in growing theology, in a growing religion. As soon as anything that I have believed in ceases to be of value, it is gone; I drop it instantly, with a glad heart and a mind that looks forward to the larger con-

ceptions of life and to a nearer, closer knowledge of God. Keep your mind open, your hearts sincere, and your speech absolutely frank; and let God help you in your growth toward better and holier things.

Vacation Religion

NATURE and Man are at sharp counterpoints with one another at this time of the year. Summer is Nature's busy season,—every grass blade and leaf is a driving work-shop. Every waterpool and insect-inhabited crevice in tree-bark or cleft rock is teeming with intense activity. Only when winter comes does Nature rest; then her work-shops shut down; her toiling myriads of insect, fish, bird and animal life find in different form vacation season,—hybernate, go to sleep, or take flying visits to the South, to return when work season begins again in the opening of the spring. But civilized man tends to reverse this order. To be sure there is a degree in which the average man works pretty much the year through, and calls it all hard work. And the farmers keep strict time with Nature, insist upon being verily her children, that when she works hardest, they toil with her, and only when she rests, consent to take their leisure. But in city and suburban life we are changing all that. As far as possible we try to make the winter months our busy season. Then shops are crowded, and factories are under high pressure and social functions are feverishly pursued, the schools and colleges ply their tasks; the churches are at work. For then we say, we feel more like working. There is sparkling vigor in keen winds; there is tonic in frosty aide; there is nipping eagerness of ambition and enthusiasm in the days when to be comfortable one must be active.

But when summer comes the soul of man grows languid. Nature besets us behind and before with temptations to do nothing; ambition languishes; energy oozes away; one only does what one has to do, and seeks the seashore or the mountains, or the country farm where he can simply rest and loiter.

Now religion of course is something which has to do with the whole of human experience, and not simply a part of it; and religion is something that by good rights never takes vacation. We close up churches, sometimes, and let the fires burn pretty low beneath the boilers of specific church enterprises. But we could not make greater mistake than to fancy that the organized church absorbed all that there is to religion. Religion is reverence for the eternal, and love of fellow man. Religion is being sure that Love and Truth and Right are the best things in life, for they are the essential things; and being eager to help other men and women in the world be happy and true by finding more love and truth and righteousness in life's common way. That's all that religion is: love of God—love of man. And it is the business of the church to help us gain that: make us conscious of our need of the double love, and our power to share the double love; and when a man is really busy in his "busy seasons", business, social duty, politics, home life, and school may be made to twine all about these double loves,—that to be loyal to Truth, Love and Right,—to be loyal to one's neighbor and God, be just the most practical and sensible and noblest exercise of business, social duty and the rest—we hurry then on religion's errands when we are honest and kindly, and charitable, and eagerly loving with the love that lifts burdens and climbs to crosses, in the immediate round of daily duty; so that religion's busy season is inevitably the season of man's most busy business, and the same thing that makes the blood run quick and nerves tingle with energy for business ambition and social zeal in the days of frost and nipping air, may make also for the enthusiasm, eagerness, devotion which are religion's noblest aspects.

But when the days come when it is not easy to be so energetic and eager, and one says within his soul: "Whatever I have to do now, let me make it easy!", then, is it after all, in any sense religion's vacation season? The church at home may close,—or reduce its services, and the church machinery stop its spinning, but shall conscience take a rest? shall love become languid? shall faith find downy bed of inactivity? shall reverence slip to idle ways?

More or less unconsciously, I'm afraid, we easily find ourselves assenting to these things; and perhaps there is a sense in which we cannot keep the spirit keyed up to its best conditions all the year round. And yet I am inclined to think that summer is a time of religion's great opportunity in certain ways.

In the first place summer rest itself is properly a religious thing. It is not a concession to the lower weaknesses of frail flesh: it is the honest assertion of the soul's divine needs. A true man in business or profession or social place of large influence does a genuinely religious thing when he insists upon having a substantial summer vacation. I have a notion that if old Dante had lived in modern times, he would have written one more canto in his Inferno, and would have pictured there the just reward of these sinners on earth, whose great sin is that they take no rest; never have vacation,or give it to those who are dependent upon them. If in the doing of life's honest work,—if in the asserting of your manhood or womanhood at its best and most vigorous, to make the world you live in a better world because you live in it, you are going to meet Paul's sensible injunction to present *your bodies* a willing sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service,—you must master the common sense of periodic resting. When summer breezes coax you to languor, when glowing sunshine urges indolent ease, when summer sky is written all over with invitations to idleness, and the very birds and crickets chirp of leisure hours, know then that their voices come straight from God,—they are charged with honest messages from on high. Nature's God knows that you need their invitation,—that you build up soul and body in the sanctities of idleness. It is your Christian duty then to rest as best you can.

Only be honest in your resting. Do it as unto God and not as unto man. Don't make your vacation pilgrimage a useless sacrifice to the Mammon of this world, all spontaneous freedom taken from it through foolish social ambition, or petty social pride. God says to you, "Go where you may honestly recreate and become strong for the work I have for you to do next winter," and if Fashion or Pride or Social Ambition say anything else, put them behind you. Religion's duty now is rest, in the name of God.

But then in your quest for sensible rest I trust you will take religion along with you: always of the honest kind. Not cant of course, or ostentatious piety, or oppressive sanctimoniousness, or itching appetite for theological discussion. Such things are bad anywhere, but of all times bad in these days when God's world glows in summer's out-door sanctity, and the soul of man has glad chance to be free and unaffected. But the genuine restfulness of summer's chance of languor and quiet, may be deepened and enriched and glorified to splendid degree if we can put into it generously religion's better things. For one thing, summer vacation gives us kindly chance to meet in pleasant way new people and so enlarge our range of human sympathy. It gets us out of the ruts of conventional neighborship. A friend once told me that the best part of vacation was not change of scene but change of neighbors. We get away from the people whom we deal with most of the year, those with whom it is our business to drive bargains, and engage in trade,—and combat in local politics, and have our little functions in social affairs. Now we meet people with whom we have no bargains to drive: who are in kindly ignorance of our local weaknesses and past mistakes: and for whose neighborly concerns we feel no responsibility. We meet them on kindly terms; they and we are introduced by the sympathy of our common errand,—to have a good time and recreate.

And yet how much the success of

vacation resting depends upon our relations to these different people! The sort of kindliness we bring, and the sort of spirit we meet, may make all the difference in the world in successful recreations. Life's great responsibilities are not on us at all. Conscience has no clarion notes summoning us to strenuous activities; and yet there is nowhere else where the fine dust, as we may call it, of religion,—the little shreds of sacrifice and kindliness and patience, and trueness, may be so much of consequence, as in the relations which summer travel and summer sojourning usually bring. All the day long religion has not her great tasks but her little loyalties: that gossip become not mean gossip; that pleasure seeking become not selfishly pleasure-killing for those about us; that summer life be not cheapened by that which is unclean, unwholesome and untrue poured out in random talk and deed among young people thrown in with us; that prejudice and pride and vanity and self-esteem make us not enemies of those about us, with weary annoyances:—what busy time religion may have in our souls through just these little exercises of the spirit which may count in wholesome growth! Why I have known,—yes, let me tell the precise truth about it,—I have known the coming of one white-necktied clergyman into the fellowship of a summer boarding-house to put every thing wrong; because of the innumerable petty ways that saintly man had of being unreligious in the trifling things he said and did; and I have known on the other hand, a rather ill-bred, rough mannered man of coarse language and unreligious habit of life,to come into the same fellowship and somehow shed good humor and jollity and kindliness, and social charity and fellow-feeling generally, as the sun sheds warmth abroad when it breaks through the clouds of a lingering east storm, and I liked the religion of that man who was a little vulgar better that I did the religion of the man who wore the white necktie! We had better digestion and better spirits because of him. For it helped us all. The soul may rest itself in this finely diffused spirit of kindly religiousness which summer relations bring about, more than as though all need of little social sacrifices were swept away.

And then those exceptional chances which we have in summer outings to become sympathetically intimate with little children,to be tender and kind to old people, to be thoughtful of those who are not well, to be patient with those who are socially clumsy,to be considerate of the shy, and genial to the sensitive,—these are divine chances if we may make them so,—little, trickling source-streams of religion, which flowing together become tributaries to the great stream of Christ-like character which by and by, in life's busier time, shall make the great wheels of life's teeming action go eagerly on,—and it is restful to the soul to acquire their habit.

Again summer is a good time in which to think. I don't mean hard, complicated, philosophic thinking; that is about as taxing work as a soul can undertake. It is the great good thing about religion that its best truths are divinely simple. And when summer time comes, and the drive of business and social life lets up a little, and one does not have to hurry about anything,—there are a host of of trival things one can fill up vacation hours with, surely enough,—much of folly, much wearysome make-believes at recreation;—but, if we would only take it, how now, with Nature beautiful about us, sky gentle, trees full of tender music, bird-notes redolent with the raw material of psalms, and the voice of many waters at ocean side or where brooks ripple sunlight laughter down hill-slopes and through wood-glens, with every ripple kindly, and every noble breaker heart-seeking,—how now the soul's rare chance comes just to be still and know that God is God—and think not theology, but how to be generous and true in more consistent fashion right through life's course, because there is a God whose name is Love. We have time to think *above* business,—*above* social gossip and frivolity, straight into the realm of the soul's simple things of inner life, of Honor, Truth and Humanity-love, and measure our souls by high standards, and plant the patient seeds of

nobler resolution, just because the body is stilled by languor and ambitions softened in physical rest. Can't we take a little more religious pains to make the most of such opportunity? Let the piazza gossip go for a little, once in a while; put the light summer novel by, (it will keep splendidly!) just take Nature's hand in your own, as you sit under some shady tree, or by brook-side or on beach sands with ocean's roar so nobly in your ears, and think simple thoughts, but deep ones, about your sweetest and holiest ideals, about your relations to brother men, about your sense of duty and of charity to those who are near to you, and about God, the Father-God, All-Friendly God, whose voice is Conscience, whose spirit is Love, so near to you in your soul's own secret being.

It is better than hearing sermons, it is better than reading religious books, sometimes, just to take the time to think *your own thoughts* in this simple fashion, when Nature is sympathetic with you—and yet so easy, if one does not take pains about it, to have filled a whole summer season up, with all its Nature voices drowned out, with all its Nature-sympathy unheeded, with so much rubbish of unrestful triviality and hard work of social dissipation, that we come through it with spirits if not body more worn out than ever.

It is significant that the custom of man gives him chance to pause right in the high tide of Nature's best activities. We have much to learn of her patience, persistence, universal sympathy: and the great impartiality of life which is the essence of charity. What a pity if we should lose its opportunity! We do not want to weight our vacation season down with too much moral purpose, with too much iron rule of conscience, we want to be free, simple, and childlike in our seeking for rest and recreation; but after all there is restfulness and recuperation for spirit, and strengthening for soul, if we will only learn it, in just quiescent thought and musing by ourselves in Nature's presence, which it is religion to enjoy, these summer days.

I have a notion,—perhaps I am mistaken about it, but—have a notion that when the Man of Nazareth in that busiest year of his life, after he had got through with being for twelve years a busy carpenter in Nazareth and had thrown hammer and plane and saw aside to enter into the eager service of his divine Messiahship,—I have a notion that when in the busiest time of that ministry Jesus used sometimes at close of day to slip away from his companions, and go apart by himself into the hills or to the lake coast to pray, as the gospel states it, that the "prayer" was not simply casting himself on his knees, and closing his eyes, and repeating devout words, though that were part of it; but sometimes it was just being there on the green sward of the hill-side and gazing off over the beautiful valleys and watching the noble sunset, and lifting his eyes unto the distant mountains, and seeing the gleam of the crescent moon as it danced in reflection over the waters of the lake. or heeded the stars as one by one they awoke in the skies out of the fading tranquility of twilight, and because he could enjoy these things and their beauty —could rest and be calm in their presence and did not try to pray words but feel deep feelings beneath words, he found his best inspiration, felt the nearness of the divine fact of God, and then went back to his disciples to attend his Father's business. So with us—summer brings to us, as no other season can, all these holy chances to be apart by ourselves,—to be near to God, our Father God, to rest with him, to feel deep feelings that are deeper than words, and know how we are in the Father: how the holy spirit of the Father is in us, and how we may be one with him,—as we learn the secret of Jesus, the soul's true way of consecrated service, of faith that forever trusts, of love that makes sacrifices, of wills that are one with God's in the teeming industry of eternal life!

———o———

Every gift of God is good, and given for our happiness; and we sin if we abuse it. To use our fancy to our own misery is to abuse it, and to sin. The realm of the possible was given to man to hope, and not to fear in.—*Charles Kingsley.*

The Light Within

By REV. FREDERICK M. BENNETT

THERE is a light within which lighteth every man coming into the world. What is its nature? We may pass it through the prism of reflection to see of what it is composed:

We have the power to know, and the faith to believe in the reality and worth of wisdom. The search for truth has become a terrible burden as well as an exalted joy for the spirit of man. We choose to carry this burden and make use of it for the fulfillment of life. In manifold ways the truth and worth of the world break into the consciousness and character of humanity. Something within the soul of man responds to the revelations that continuously are being made. We do not always call it so but we know that it is the divine wisdom giving himself to the soul of his child. The universe responds to our continuous search for its truth, and this response seems nothing less than the revelation of the life of God to the soul. The divine wisdom is revealed. By searching we do find out God, and largely by searching. We think God's thoughts, and the sometimes painful process is shot through with the deepest joy and satisfaction. This power of sharing the wisdom of God is a ray of the divine light within the soul of man.

We have the power to create and appreciate the beautiful, and we also have the joy of it. The glory of the world breaks upon us from every quarter if we but open our lives to behold it. But there is a power within us by which we may add to its wealth and worth. We, too, are creators. Our literature, art and song we add to the riches and beauty of the divine life which shows through all the world. We consciously create, and we know that the product of our efforts may be divine.

Not only in the realms of the beautiful, but in other realms we command and fashion a diviner life for the world. We will, we cause changes, in our own, and in the lives about us. We do not admit that we have no efficient part in these processes. We, too, are the builders of that wonderful life which we call character, and we can not say thatwe do not do it in freedom.

We are creators with God in the realms of righteousness. There are moral purposes at the heart of human life which we feel it imperative to complete. We are, or may be, active, efficient, free workers in the realms of goodness. Righteousness is the great goal of human endeavor, and here we have initiative and are more or less free to gain the victory over actual and possible evil. We have many purposes of more or less concern, but the great purpose is the formation of character. That is the great issue and we are willing to trust it above all else, and are largely free to accomplish it. In this we are creators more than in any other realm. In this we share the capacity of the divine life for the creation of the eternal light.

Some assume that in all these capacities human life is fated. But this is exactly what we wish to deny and oppose. That we so often fail of success in that which we attempt to establish in the realms of the true, the beautiful, and the good, is the best of evidence that we are free to succeed if we will. The joy of our successes would be a devilish mockery if it were not earned through free personal endeavor. What worth would there be in life if all goals were given as the result of determined destiny or fate? Human nature is such that it would scorn to accept worth on such terms. If we cannot rise above sin and blot it out of life by conscious effort, if we cannot prevent evils, and gain the victory for ourselves and others over every failure, if tragedy means only tragedy, and sorrow only loss, if we are wholly in the hands of a power which makes life and its issues for its own and predetermined ends, then life and its gifts is an illusive mockery and not worth accepting. If that is what

it means to have divine light within we should be right in refusing such gifts.

But we know in our hearts that it is not so. Human life rises up in its own strength and conscious worth and freedom to declare the opposite truth. Human life is free in these capacities and is meant to have more freedom than it as yet has ever exercised. Life is continuously and progressively purposeful, and the fulfillment of these purposes is a great and worthy reality. In the consciousness of such quality and capacity we have rights and the right to reject every fatalism that man in his foolishness and blindness has ever imagined for himself or the world. So we are free spirits with power with a unity of life and worth, with creative, causative energies which aspire to and continuously make for the perfecting of life. We are creative, purposeful souls. Shall we imagine that God is less than we are? Must we not believe that he is more? Shall we not credit him with greater capacities and purposes, more freedom, more continuously creative capacity for the true, the beautiful the good?

An Open Air Summer Campaign

An experiment both novel and promising in its character is to be tried in Unitarian propaganda work this summer Recognizing the fact that in almost all the small towns, even in New England, there is no declaration of the liberal faith and no possibility of organizing Unitarian societies, it is planned to send missioners through the country whose purpose it shall be to hold open-air services in a number of such places. Under the charge of Rev. Charles W. Casson, Secretary of the Publicity Department of the American Unitarian Association, five trips have been arranged through five states in New England. Two ministers will go together to the towns selected as their circuit. The method will be to spend the day in circulating notices of the meeting and Unitarian literature, and in the evening to hold an open-air service in some central part of the town. It is not hoped to form any kind of definite organization as the result of these services. The aim is simply to declare the liberal faith to those who have not had any other means of hearing it and of sharing, in this way, our heritage of religious truth. All the men taking part in this work are full of zeal and enthusiasm and imbued with a missionary spirit which is sure to result in helpful influence.

Rev. W. A. Wood, of Wilton, and Rev. H. G. Ives, of Andover, N. H., will take the New Hampshire circuit, visiting Antrim, Hillsboro Bridge, Bristol, Lakeport, Ashland and Plymouth. In Vermont, Rev. F. J. Gauld, of Leominister, Mass. and Rev. H. E. Gilchrist, of New Orleans, La., will visit and hold services in Middlebury, Proctor, Castleton, Fairhaven, and Poultney, besides crossing over to Whitehall, N. Y.

Rev. E. J. Prescott, of Rockland, and Rev. George F. Pratt, of Dorchester, have arranged a similar tour through Maine, with Freeport, Brunswick, Wiscasset, Gardiner, Richmond, and Boothbay Harbor as the towns selected for their work. A similar circuit of towns in Northwestern Massachusetts will be visited by Rev. Kenneth C. Evans of Chicopee, and Rev. Earl C. Davis, of Pittsfield. Among those already chosen are Great Barrington, Lee, Dalton, Chester and Huntington, besides open-air meetings in Pittsfield on August 15th.

Rev. E. G. Brown, recently of Presque Isle, Maine, and another minister not yet selected will hold meetings in Connecticut, visiting Putnam, Plainfield, Jewett City, Saybrook, Haddam and Portland.

If this campaign is successful, it is very probable that similar work will be carried on in a much larger degree next year. It is hoped also to have for use in the campaign of 1910 an automobile van, by the use of which we could effectively follow the example of the van missioners in England who have done so much during the last two years to stimulate interest in the liberal cause. During the winter, an appeal will be made for funds to secure such a vehicle, if the results of this summer's work indicate a promise of its efficiency as a missionary agent.

Life the True Prayer

By SARAH E. BURTON

WHATEVER the lips may or may not utter, life is the true prayer. This is revealed to the earnest seeker through varied experiences, some sweet, some bitter, but all leading to a deeper insight. An instance, one of many which comes to the ear of the sympathetic listener, may be related as an illustration of this truth.

A woman was suffering from a grievous wrong. It had come through a professed and accepted friend, making the pain doubly sharp. How could the wronged one ever meet the faithless friend, as meet they must? Days passed saddened by her efforts to decide what her own demeanor ought to be when that meeting should come. Must she play the hypocrite and show no sign of her sense of wrong, wrong done by one she had esteemed and loved? Or should she frankly disavow further confidence in the professions of friendship from one capable of such conduct? She was suffering consequences of that conduct in other ways than her feeling. Should she tell that mistaken woman wherein and how far she was responsible for so much suffering?

"That mistaken woman!" A new thought! It seemed incredible, but was it not possible that she did not know what she had done? "Judge not that ye be not judged" came like a flash of light through her consciousness and, rebuked and humbled, she waited further developments.

The meeting came unexpectedly to both ladies in a crowded public assembly. The face of the mistrusted friend beamed with the old friendly smile, her hand was extended with wonted cordiality.

"I was coming to see you this very afternoon," she said, "I thought as I saw you across the church, Sunday, that you looked very sad. I hope no sorrow has come to you," she added most gently.

How utterly unconscious she was! The grieved lady passed her hand over her brow as if to brush away her misconception before replying:

"None I hope that will not pass away in the true light. I only wait for light."

"Oh, I am so glad!" was the response "May the light come soon!"

They parted with a hand-clasp, warm and sympathetic on the part of one, half convinced, half doubtful and wholly mystified on the part of the other. It was clear the erring friend did not realize what she had done. Ought she to be told, that she might see the consequences of such conduct and feel the grave responsibility of suffering thoughtlessly inflicted?

That night Sleep, as he had done of late, stood afar off. Though belief of conscious motive and purpose had been removed, the sad fact remained, the wound was not healed, the wrong not atoned for. But where were her credentials for performing the office of self-revelation to another? She perhaps needed that very service herself. She tried to pray; no words but those of the Master came to her lips: "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name." She lingered over the familiar words, trying to realize in its blessed fulness the meaning of "Our Father;" then later, asking how one like herself could hallow that holy name. Not by lip only, that she could see, but in every thought, word and deed of daily life. Had she been doing this with bitterness in her heart toward another child of the Father? God forgive her, she surely had not! Then came "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive" —the stricken woman slipped from the bed to her knees in an agony of penitent conviction. "O God," she moaned, "how many times have I strayed from the true path unknowingly! How many times hast Thou forgiven me in my blindness because of Thy great love! Thou alone knowest! Teach me the way that I may follow Thee."

Kneeling and communing thus through

the summer night, her whole being became enwrapped by clear eyed charity and forgiving love. She felt invisible arms like those of a tender mother holding her in a close embrace, and—oh joy! —not her alone but all the children of men, the children of God. With the morning light came consciousness that the pain was gone, the wound healed, the wrong needing no atonement. Streaming tears of mingled humility, gratitude, love and peace came as a baptism of the Holy Spirit. Henceforth—"Hallowed be Thy name," "Forgive as we forgive" should enter into every thought, word and deed of her serious moments. The vow was so well kept that no alienation of friendship came then or was ever threatened in the years that followed. So strong and abiding was her desire to make her life the true prayer she felt that the sacred words which had helped her in her extremity were too sacred ever to be uttered save in the solemn, waiting silence of her own soul.

As there is no breach of confidence, no danger of identification this incident in the life of a sincere woman is recorded for the possible value it may have for another. The lip service need not be omitted, must not be omitted, lest a great help to the life prayer be lost. But only as it lifts us to that most-to-be-desired end does it fulfill the full office of prayer, is a truism admitted and proclaimed by all religious thinkers.

Our Cause in Albany

We have just closed a vigorous year of work in our Albany Church.

The Unitarian Club for men seems to be the most promising feature for the future. In a city already too much "clubbed" its progress has been remarkable. It is non-political and unsectarian. In its membership are found Roman Catholics, Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians and possibly those representing other divisions of Christianity as well as Unitarians. The avowed purpose of the Club is to afford a forum for the discussion of all public questions.

It is the aim of the board of governors to select questions that are vital and human. A lecture upon some topic, like "Democracy in the Philippines," "The present political crisis", is given by a competent speaker. Discussion follows. The meetings are exclusively for men. In other words the club is organized upon an intellectual and ethical basis and our experience shows that men need this sort of thing.

The minister extended the right hand of fellowship to fifteen new members the second Sunday in June. This fellowship Sunday was made a memorial Sunday as well; so that we could remember those who passed beyond the veil while taking new members into the fellowship of the church.

The special services on the first Sunday evening in the month, in which the minister, Rev. Dr. William S. Morgan, takes opportunity to present various phases of Unitarianism have been exceptionally successful. Five of these sermons were printed and scattered in the community. They have also been published in one volume with the title "Nuggets of Gold." The topics treated in the five sermons are: 1. The Creed of a Unitarian. 2. The Unitarian Method of Faith. 3. Unitarianism and Modern Thought. 4. The Progress of Unitarian Ideals. 5. Our Hope of Immortality.

The minister and individual members of the church are doing all they can for the political and civic betterment of our city and state. Horatio M. Pollock, the superintendent of our Sunday School and one of our trustees and most active members is the general secretary of our "Civic League." This League has about five hundred members. Its avowed purpose is to make Albany a better place in which to live. Dr. Pollock is the editor in chief of the league's magazine: *The Albany Citizen*. Dr. Morgan is one of the associate editors.

There is no action so slight nor so mean but it may be done to a great purpose, and ennobled thereby: nor is any purpose so great but that slight acts may help it.—*Ruskin.*

The Historic Episcopate

JUST at this moment when the union of the various Protestant denominations for the increase of personal and social righteousness is of such supreme importance in America the attitude of certain ministers of the Episcopal Church would be comedy if it were not tragedy. That sincere and consistent members of the leading Orthodox churches should seek to exclude Unitarians from such a Union is reasonable and natural. If Christianity means the worship of the historic Jesus as a divine or supernatural being then Unitarians are not Christians; and the men who believe that such a dogma is essential to salvation are perfectly justified in refusing to work with them for the amelioration of society. The position held by our orthodox friends is our only reason for our separate existence as a religious body. But that the Episcopal Church, (English or American) should insist upon the acceptance of the "Historic Episcopate" as the condition of a working organic unity with certain other evangelical sects must be astounding to every man who has any knowledge of the history of that Church. The "Established" Church is simply the form which the Protestant movement took in England, modified by certain conditions which were not present in the continental churches. Of course it is rank nonsense to talk about the English Church being the fruit of royal lust, etc. and etc., but the papal refusal in the matter of Henry's divorce furnished the immediate occasion if not the cause of the ultimate break with Rome. But the King with all his imperiousness of temper had too much common sense and political sagacity to take so important a step had he not known that the most influential part of the nation was with him. In truth it may be said that at the time of Henry's break with Rome he was still a catholic, and probably a majority of the English people held the same religious opinion. They thought that a nation could be soundly catholic, and yet be separated from the Papal supremacy. Crammer was of the opinion that the King being the head of the English church might by virtue of divine authority make a priest. But the trend of public opinion was so strongly inclined towards the Protestant movement that when the English church took final doctrinal shape, her articles of religion were colored and saturated with Lutheran theology. "And to this day", says an eminent authority, "the constitution, the doctrines, the services of the church retain the visible marks of the compromise from which she sprang". And nowhere was that compromise between the old faith and the new more definitely marked than in the matter of the "historic Episcopate." Says the authority I have just quoted "the founders of the Anglican church took a middle course. They retained Episcopacy but they did not declare it to be an institution essential to the welfare of a Christian society, or to the efficacy of the sacraments". Proofs of this are abundant and easily accessible "In the year 1603," says Macaulay, "the convocation of the Province of Canterbury solemnly recognized the church of Scotland as a branch of the Holy Catholic church of Christ. It was then held that Presbyterian ministers were entitled to a place and voice in Ecumenical councils. When the state general of the United Province convoked at Dort * * * an English Bishop and an English Dean sat with those doctors, preached to them and voted with them on the gravest questions of theology. Nay *many* English benefices were held by divines who had been admitted to the ministry in the Calvanistic form on the continent, nor was reordination by a Bishop then thought necessary or even *lawful*". Here we have then the conviction and attitude of the great Methodist body. That church has "retained Episcopacy", but does not declare it to

be essential in the structure of a Christian church. Every Roman Catholic and every member of the Greek Orthodox communion denies the validity of the orders of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and Cardinal Newman not only left that Church in search of a "real Bishop", but is amazed at his own early ignorance in supposing that such a Church had ever held the "historic Episcopate."

It might be supposed that such opinions were uttered by the enemies or or critics of the Anglican Church and its American child.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Phillips Brooks, the greatest preacher and one of the ablest Bishops of the Episcopal Church in this country, "retained episcopacy", used it as a valuable and useful method of Church government, but openly denies the doctrine of "Apostolic succession". He looked forward with hope to just such union of the varying protestant sects, as has been recently suggested. Dr. Hatch of the English Church in his lectures on the constitution of the Early Church undermines the doctrice of the "Historic Episcopate." For a very searching analysis of this phase of early ecclesiastical history turn to "The Christian Institutions," by Arthur P. Stanley, Dean of Westminster. He says, "It is certain that the officers of the Apostolic, or any subsequent Church were not part of the original institution of the Founder of our religion, that of Bishop, Presbyter, and Deacon of Metropolitan, Patriarch and Pope there is not a shadow of a trace in the four gospels * * * It is important to observe how with the recognition of this gradual growth and change of the early names and offices of the Christian ministry, the long and fierce controversy between Presbyterianism and Episcopacy, which continued from the sixteenth to the first part of the nineteenth century, has entirely lost its significance. It is as sure that nothing like modern Episcopacy existed before the close of the first century as it is that nothing like modern Presbyterianism existed after the beginning of the second * * No existing Church can find any pattern or platform of its government in those early times." He then adds these words of wisdom so pregnant with meaning for present controversies: "It has been the misfortune of churches, that unlike states, there has been on all sides equally a disposition either to assume the existence in early days of all the later principles of civilization, or else to imagine a primitive state of things which never existed at all."

The great and radical changes which have taken place in the administration of the Christian Church during the centuries is an evidence that to its great leaders and prophets nothing was essential to its continued existence, and activity except the vital spirit of righteousness which came from its founder. The Episcopalian is right when he holds that for centuries there was no recognized form of Church government except by Bishops. The Congregationalist is right when he is equally sure that there was a vigorous Christian church before Episcopacy was born. The Baptist is right when he asserts that immersion was once the universal method of baptism. The seventh-day Baptist is justified in his claim that the Fourth commandment requires the observance of the seventh day as the sabbath. They are all wrong if they make these purely external things essential in Christian discipleship. Imagine Paul hunting around for a "real" bishop to ordain him! Think of the Apostle gravely discussing the question of how much or how little water was necessary to constitute valid baptism! His great doctrine of "Justification by Faith" made all such questions the "beggarly elements" of the world of literalism. In the sunlight of that great doctrine nothing avails but a "new creation."

Surely there should be no test of Christian discipleship except what is found in the ability to create righteousness. Ought there to be any other basis for Christian union? *With* bishops the Episcopal and Methodist churches have been powerful in the creation of Christian character. *Without* bishops the Baptists and Congregationalists have planted and reaped great spiritual

harvests. *With* immersion the Baptists have shown mighty power in the work of the Evangelism. *Without* immersion the Episcopal Church has made great saints. In creating a great army for the conflict with social evil the protestant sects can safely sacrifice all those individual peculiarities which have been proven to be non-essential in building the Kingdom of God.

Isles of Shoals Summer Meetings

THE vital charm of these summer meetings is not communicable through any written report that can be published after they are over. The best part of their achievement lies not so much in the things spoken in formal address, (though we were peculiarly fortunate in the high quality of our speaking of this year) as in the atmosphere of good fellowship, and the cumulative influence of high thought and aspiration which grows out of the shared privileges of a rare experience of sequestered nature beauty, congenial comradeships, and consecutive direction in uplifting thought.

The attendance, this year, was not quite equal to that of last year due chiefly perhaps in the conservative caution of the hotel people in promising rooms. But the company was large and enthusiastic.

The morning addresses were devoted to the discussion of "The Church and the Social Order." Monday's address was on "Jesus and the Social Order" by Rev. J. T. Sunderland of Hartford Conn.; Tuesday's on "The Back Ground of Social Unrest" by Rev. Frederick Gill of Arlington, Mass. Thursday's address was to have been a "Justification of Capitalism" by Rev. Chas. Ferguson of New York, but he was unable to be present, and instead Rev. Albert Lazenby of Lynn, read a most delightful paper on "Bernard Shaw."Friday morningbrought a vigorous and breezy presentation of the "Religion of Socialism" by Rev. Charles W. Casson, and the morning course nobly culminated Saturday morning with an inspiring address by Rev. Charles F. Dole, D. D., on "The Religion of the Social Man."

The addresses of the evenings were of a more miscellaneous and popular character. Monday evening Rev. S. A. Eliot, D. D., gave a very informing address on "Some Unitarian Pioneers": Tuesday evening Rev. Albert Lazenby gave a lecture on "Scottish Ballads" with spirited illustrations by the ladies of the quartet; Wednesday evening, Rev. Benjamin R. Bulkeley of Beverley,Mass., gave a graphic description of "Old Concord"; Thursday evenings' lecture was given at the "Appledore", and consisted of an illustrated lecture on "The Canadian Rockies", by Rev. Louis C. Cornish of Hingham, Mass. Friday evening came the delightful concert by the Westland quartet, whose charm of voice and winsomeness of personality have made them indeed a very congenial factor in the pleasure of these meetings. Every session of the week has been graced by some contribution of their good service, not even the little meetings at the stone meeting house being neglected by them. The enthusiasm of the audience at the Concert was a genuine appreciation of musical talent of very high order with it too but an expression of the hearty gratitude of our people, for the friendliness of such unstinted service in our behalf. Saturday evenings' address was one of peculiar interest and satisfaction to us all, both because Mrs. Marean gave it, and because it was the story of "the Isles of Shoals," so keenly interesting to us all.

The more distinctively religious services of the week consisted in the daily devotional meetings, morning and evening at the Stone Meeting House, and the larger preaching services on the two Sundays. A simple communion service

at the Meeting House began the week's sessions. The morning sermon of the first Sunday was preached by Rev. Philip S. Moxom D. D. of Springfield, Mass., the evening sermon of the same day by Rev. J. T. Sunderland. The morning chapel services were conducted in turn by Rev. A. D. K. Shurtleff, A. N. Robinson, Harold G. Arnold, Abbott Peterson, Frank S. C. Wicks, and Chas. E. Stowe. The sermons of the second Sunday were given by Rev. Augustus P. Reccord of Springfield, Mass. and Rev. Alfred R. Hussey of Baltimore, Md.

The second week was devoted to the sessions of the "Sunday School Institute". We go to press too soon to permit of a detailed account of its sessions. The attendance is good: the spirit of work most inspiring, and surely the program of good things prepared of noblest quality. A lion's share of hard work has fallen upon Rev. W. I. Lawrance of Winchester, Mass., whose series of Bible readings from the prophets is of peculiar value. Rev. W. C. Gannett, D. D. of Rochester, N. Y. brings two most stimulating lectures, one on "The New Teacher and his Training," and the other on "The Home Factor" and besides these his very presence with us in conference meetings and informal conversations is a genuine element of inspiration. Mrs. Clara T. Guild of the Tuckerman School has given two helpful papers on Sunday School methods and Miss Sara Bullard of Boston gave a uniquely interesting "illustration" of how a Kindergarten program could be developed. A series of lectures on the Life of Jesus was introduced by Rev. J. H. Crooker of Roslindale, and consisted of three lectures besides by Prof. Crawford W. Toy, D. D. of the Harvard Divinity School. The sessions of the Institute were opened by a very sensible address by Rev. H. T. Secrist of Roxbury, representing the Unitarian Sunday School Society who also conducted a conference on "the New Graded System" later in the week. Rev. A. P. Reccord also proved a valuable friend to the Institute giving a most suggestive address on "The Distinctive Task of the Unitarian Sunday School" Tuesday evening, and at short notice supplementing Mr. Lawrance's course of readings by one on Jeremiah. Wednesday evening, Mrs. John A. Bellows gave an address on "The Children and the Old Testament." Friday evening was devoted to a Program of Informal Vaudeville, and it may be said that not only on this ocasion, but on several evenings of the week the young people found ample opportunities for recreation and social relaxation from the strenuous program of the Institute.

At the last session of the Institute the following recommendations were voted·

Recommendations.

The Isles of Shoals Sunday School Institute, held at the Isles of Shoals July 19-23, having passed an interesting and helpful week together, desires to express gratitude for this opportunity of lectures and conferences, and, further, in view of the admirable efforts made by the great Churches around us to raise the standards of Sunday-school education, and of the fact that this autumn's publication of a graded course of manuals makes a new important departure for ourselves, the Institute desires to send to the Unitarian Sunday School Society and to our churches the following earnest recommendations:-

First, that the Tuckerman School in Boston be adopted by our churches as their training-school for Sunday-school teachers and parish workers; that the ministers acquaint themselves with its great possibilities for usefulness, and use it as an ally in their work; and that the churches, alliances, young people's unions, and Sunday-schools endeavor to send pupils each year to avail themselves of its privileges.

Second, that Sunday-school Unions for the betterment of Sunday-school methods be established, with at least monthly meetings, wherever the number of churches in neighborhood allows, and that all local conferences include in their programme at least one Sunday-school session a year, with practical object-lessons and conference-talks.

Third, that the Isles of Shoals Sunday School Institute be more warmly appreciated and supported by our people; that to this end the committee in charge be requested to prepare and send out the programme for the next session as early as April; and that the churches

recognizing this opportunity for teacher-training, bear as far as possible the expenses of delegates to its sessions.

Fourth, that special meetings of Sunday-school workers and parents be held early this fall in the local churches, at which the new scheme of graded lessons shall be explained and the best methods of using them be suggested, by the minister or by persons sent out by the Sunday School Society.

Fifth, that, inasmuch as many of our churches are by distance unable to avail themselves of the helps already suggested, the Sunday School Society co-operate with the churches in holding Local Institutes for teacher-training, and that for this purpose the working staff of the society be increased by at least one additional officer, who, with the president, shall undertake this larger work.

Sixth, that in view of this suggested increase in the work and consequent expenses of the Sunday School Society, the churches, Sunday-schools, and individuals interested in the welfare of our young people be urged to contribute so largely to the support of the society that its income shall be at least doubled.

The Institute believes that the present is an opportune moment for our denomination to take a distinct step forward in its efforts to promote the betterment of our Sunday-schools and a higher religious education for our young people.

Wild Roses

(Appledore Island)

1

It was a wild rose morning in July
The air was filled with sweetness and with light,
But, in my heart, were shadows housed, that clung,
Like mantles, from a weary sleepless night.

2

For I had brought the cares of all the world,
Along with me in thought and tired heart,
As pondering on the ills of human life,
I failed to see them from my life apart.

3

And though I strayed along a grassy path,
And thanked my God, who made the grass and air,
I said the same God makes disease and death,
He makes the foul and mingles with the fair.

4

And o'er my heart a bitterness came down,
A mingling of marvel and dismay,
To think that He who made the earthquake shocks,
Could make the bliss of such a perfect day.

5

Wherefore shall not his children strive and strain,
Life inequalities to understand,
And ask why now he scatters blossoms fair,
Or without warning, devastates the land.

6

We tell of compensation and redress,
In grand conventions hurry to and fro,
And yet the bitter truth we all confess,
That truth is still, "Great God, we do not know."

7.

I only raise mine eyes to where the clouds,
Are sailing in the blue of upper air,
Then drop them to the roses at my feet,
And say that, just for me, the world is fair.

8.

For me, just now, on this enchanted isle,
Forgotten is the problem and the strife,
I only know that roses round me bloom,
And ne'er so fair and tranquil seems, sweet life.

9.

Perhaps, I've learned a lesson from the rose,
A lesson that shall heal this heart of mine,
For here are jagged sharp and cruel rocks,
And poisoned ivy trails it's threatening vine.

10.

And wintry winds come tearing o'er the main
And sleet and storm assail the roses stem,
Yet each returning summer brings new life,
And every rose a perfect flawless gem.

11.

Great God it still is true we do not know,
Thy ways are fast our understanding still,
We cannot say why flowers bloom above,
And black miasmas breed beneath the hill.

12.

But thou has given us power to work and strive,
So long as man shall dwell beneath the skies,
Then give us faith that we may yet discern,
In life, in death the Soul triumphant rise.

Kate Reseaux.

The Lot of a Minister's Wife—An Appreciation

By One of them.

WHY does a young woman act apologetic when she tells of her engagement to a minister? A charming girl announcing her approaching marriage recently said to me, "And I've always firmly declared I would never marry a minister, but here I've come to it."

Her tone and manner were a downright apology. Yet she is the daughter of a clergyman who has been successful and happy in his chosen profession. She is deeply interested in church work and in religious thought and progress. She is tactful in manner, efficient, eminently fitted for the life she is to take up. The man of her choice is one of much promise and already a pastor of considerable achievement. Why should there be one explanatory note in her announcement, especially as she is thoroughly in love and sincerely happy?

The idea that the lot of the minister's wife is peculiarly trying is a popular bugbear. It's time the beast was disposed of—by suggestion, if no other method is at hand. In that case, the duty devolves largely upon the minister's wife herself. She ought to be equal to the undertaking for she, of all people, knows that the bugbear is only a shadow of a beast.

I can remember only two people who ever told me, before my marriage, that I was suited to the lot of a minister's wife, so it cannot be that any peculiar adaptability on my part made the position an easy one. Most of my friends appeared horrified at my undertaking such a responsibility and they were not slow to point out my very apparent lack of qualifications.

One of those who took the more cheerful view was my college chum who was a minister's daughter and had always enjoyed it. She was fond of me and undoubtedly magnified my good points. At any rate, she prophesied a happy career. The other comforter was a brusque gentleman who had been chairman of the schoolboard in a town where I was once a member of the high school faculty. He said he thought I'd make a fine minister's wife. The poor minister's wife was, in his opinion, always the underdog, and he didn't think I'd ever be an under-dog anywhere. He meant it as a compliment; it sounds a bit doubtful and might have foreboded trouble.

In spite of discouragements, the wedding took place and I went to my husband's parish in a small New England town. It had been considered a difficult parish, but my minister had found it a pleasant field, and, while his previous nine months there had given him hardly more time to plow and plant a very few early crops, he was hopeful of his harvest.

I entered upon my place as a minister's wife with a tremendous handicap; I had been brought up in a different denomination, and not only was I a member of a different church, but of a church generally not acceptable to the Congregational church in a conservative community. I confess we anticipated difficulties on that score, but anticipations were as far as we ever got. We found the people courteous and tolerant, and I acquired an enormous respect for the breadth of mind which could take the rather difficult situation so admirably.

Three years of life in that parish—no better, no worse than the average New England parish—taught me that the career of minister's wife is not to be dreaded. Of course it wasn't always smooth sailing. There's sure to be some work for the pilot to do, and my minister was no exception. Sharing the rough weather and the smooth I found my voyage exceedingly enjoyable and profitable.

The people did not demand that I give up my home duties and devote all my time to church work, as parishes are popularly supposed to do. They were considerate and generous. The presence of an invalid mother and a baby nephew in my family left me only snatches of time for church work, yet I was never made to feel that more was expected of me than I was doing, though a warm welcome awaited me whenever I could join in any activities.

The minister's wife is generally supposed to be worn to death by the meddlesome

interference of outsiders in her affairs. Always there are people whose interest in others' doings is overgrown, but I met with no more interference as a minister's wife than as a teacher. Of course the salary was small, and had to be stretched pretty thin for the ends to meet around the manifold demands. That, however, is the common lot among professional people in a country town, and we were certainly as well off in that respect as if teaching, not preaching had been the vocation.

One advantage I believe our parish had and that was the modern parsonage into which we moved some months after our marriage. It was commodious, in good repair, with modern conveniences. Aside from that, the conditions under which we lived are duplicated in any number of country towns throughout New England.

Not only were there no exceptional drawbacks, but there were unusual blessings in our life. To no one is a warmer, quicker friendship extended than to the minister's wife. The motherly hearts of the parish warm towards her at once if she is young. People vie with each other in kind attentions. The intimate relationship which cements minister to people—christenings, weddings, deaths—strengthens the tie of friendship wonderfully. A year's absence has made the heart grow fonder. The friends we made there are lifelong friends, we know. They write us, visit us, extend invitations to us. Our interest in their life is quick and keen. We are glad over their rejoicings and grieved for those whom death has bereaved. The bond is a close, a pleasant one.

Why do we imagine this vain thing? Why send women into their new life with quaking hearts? Say to the girls who are to marry ministers: "It is a great life. In no other profession can you come into such close touch with your husband's work. His people will be your people, to live with and to love. You and he will grow closer together because of it. Your intimacy with these people, too, will constitute a great blessing." Every woman who has social relations must exercise tact—that nameless something which enables her to understand people and meet them in a friendly way. Perhaps the minister's wife needs to cultivate an extra supply, but it's a good commodity to have on hand in any walk of life. The one absolutely necessary quality for the girl who is to marry a minister is a cheerful attitude of mind towards her life.

I called last summer on a childhood friend, now a minister's wife. Always jolly and optimistic, I found her unchanged. "Did you find it so dreadful to be a minister's wife?" she asked. Together we laughed at, while we regretted, the popular misconception. Let it go the way of all outworn superstitions.—*The Congregationalist.*

The Northern Michigan Conference

The third anniversary of the People's Church Society of Harrietta, Mich., and the first meeting of the Northern Michigan Conference were held conjointly at Harrietta, July 10 and 11.

Mr. C. S. Udell of Grand Rapids, president of the Michigan Conference, and originator of this new conference, presided over the programme. The local church quartette assisted in an efficient and sweet way throughout the exercises. As pastor and spokesman of the People's church, Rev. B. G. Hills of Traverse City worded the welcome.

The visitors present who took part in the programme were C. S. Udell, Grand Rapids; Mrs. Hiram Marks, Detroit, president of the Michigan Associate Alliance; Rev. Hendrik Van Ommeren, Unitarian clergyman of Mount Pleasant, Mich.; Rev Ernest C. Smith, secretary of the Western Unitarian Conference; Rabbi Kahn, Reformed Jews of Grand Rapids; Rev. W. M. Backus of the First Unitarian Church of Minneapolis, Minn. The Conference opened Saturday evening. The central feature of the evening session was an address by Rev. Ernest C. Smith, subject, "The Word of Comfort According to the ModernVision" The subject itself indicated that Mr. Smith is grappling with the leading prob-

lem in the present religious progress and unrest. This address was transfused with a devoted, vital, and well-balanced personality and must leave a permanent impress for the good.

Just preceding Mr. Smith, Rev. H. Van Ommeren spoke on one phase of Mr. Smith's theme. His expression was clear, to the point, and unmistakable.

The speaker Sunday morning was Rabbi Kahn of Grand Rapids. His subject was "Liberal Deficiency," and he handled it in an impartial yet fervent manner, calculated to bring conviction to the openminded. Liberal deficiency he finds not necessitated by liberalism, but fathered by misconception or shallow conception.

Rev. W. M. Backus was the speaker of the evening. "The Divine Method" concisely named his theme. Divine life, he thinks, does not create according to the old fiat theory, but unfolds or evolves involved potencies. He announced himself as evolutionist, but not necessarily a Darwinian.

The Conference came to a close with a women's meeting, at which Mrs. Hiram Marks formally met the local delegates and briefly spoke to them of the hopes and works of liberal women.

Mr. C. S. Udell took the platform Sunday evening for a short time, and sounded the trumpet of resurrection for the defunct Sunday-school. The spirit of his address came forth and will be reincarnated next Sunday morning. Mr. Udell kept the fires in the furnace-room up to the effective temperature throughout the meeting. All felt that the conference had been a splendid success, and that the birthday of the local church had been celebrated most emphatically, and also that a new impulse to duty had come to birth among us.

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Ministers' Meeting at the National Conference

The committee appointed by the Council of the National Conference to take charge of the Ministers' Meeting request the aid of all the ministers who may attend the Conference in presenting subjects for discussion at that meeting. It is urged that topics be sent to the committee, and it is suggested that subjects should be chosen which are of general and vital interest, and closely related to ministerial work. Preference will naturally be given to topics for the presentation and discussion of which opportunity has not been given in the program of the Conference. It is hoped that the ministers of our fellowship will feel a common responsibility for the success of their meetings, and that they will respond generously to this request. Subjects should be sent to the chairman of the committee, whose address until Sept. 12th. will be Marlborough, N. H., and thereafter, 320 No. Newstead Avenue, St. Louis, Mo.

John W. Day,
Chairman.

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Unitarian Sunday School Society

A Course of Graded Lessons, The Beacon Series.

It is now one year since a prospectus was put out by the Unitarian Sunday-School Society, announcing "A Course of Graded Lessons for the Sunday School." What has been done to fulfil the promises then made?

It will be found that those in charge have met their pledges. The following expectations were held out:

The Board of Directors of the Unitarian Sunday-school Society appointed a committee to take up the matter of a graded course of Sunday-School lessons. This committee consists of Rev. Messrs. Henry T. Secrist, chairman, H. H. Saunderson, J. H. Metcalf, Lewis G. Wilson, Mrs. M. A. L. Lane, and Mrs. C. B. Beatley.

The committee has agreed on the outline. Some titles may be changed finally, but the topics will stand.

New manuals are to be made for the whole course, *excepting the Kindergarten and Advanced.* Each grade will have two manuals, one simple and concrete, for the pupil, and one with helps and references, for the teacher. These

are to be made by persons chosen by the committee, and the committee is to have oversight of the methods, the selection of material, etc., that all the parts of the course may fit together.

One year at least will be taken in making the books, and it is hoped they can be ready for the fall of 1909.

As I write these notes, July 4, 1909, the books named below, and intended to constitute this new cause, to be called, The Beacon Series, are in the printer's hands, with one or two exceptions, caused by inevitable circumstances. They are in rapid treatment, and the "hope" expressed in the beginning seems to be sure of realization. That is, those schools planning to use the new books will probably have them for the autumn session. The matured scheme is shown below:—

Kindergarten, Ages 4, 5.

Nature Lessons. Jesus in Story and Picture.

Primary, Ages 6-9.

Grade I., First Book of Religion, Mrs. Charles A. Lane. Grade II., Stories from the Old Testament, Mrs. Henry C. Parker. Grade III., Stories from the New Testament, Oliver Jay Fairfield. Grade IV., World Stories, Joel H. Metcalf.

Junior, Ages 10-13.

Grade V., The Bible and the Bible Country, Jabez T. Sunderland. Grade VI., Hebrew Beginnings, Old Testament Narratives. Part I., Edna H. Stebbins. Grade VII., Hebrew History, Old Testament Narratives. Part II., Henry Hallam Saunderson. Grade VIII., Jesus of Nazareth, Charles E. Park.

Senior, Ages 14-17.

Grade IX., The Work of the Apostles, Henry Hallam Saunderson. Grade X., Movements and Men of Christian History Charles T. Billings. Grade XI., Comparative Studies in Religion. An Introduction to Unitarianism, Henry T. Secrist. Grade XII., The Bible as Literature, John M. Wilson.

Advanced, Ages 18-.

Citizenship and Social Service. Studies in Ethics. Special Books of the Bible. Studies in Evolution. Modern Religious Teachers. The Philosophy of Religion.

The exception I mentioned of tardiness in completion is Dr. Sunderland's "The Bible and the Bible Country," and that was early understood by the committee. Time was extended in this case, in order to secure the services of one eminently fitted for the subject. It was a question of more time or no book from that source. There may be one other delay, but probably not. When we consider the array of subjects and the limited time, the condition of things at present is a credit to all concerned.

To throw as much light as possible on the whole subject, for the benefit of our schools, I will state questions asked of me by mail and in person, and give answers:—

1. In what form will these manuals appear?

Each one will be issued in paper covers and in cloth. This settles the matter of preference by purchasers.

2. How about the "Helpers"?

The Helps for Teachers are to be published in what will be known as a "Teachers' Edition." Both the Lessons and the Helps will be bound together. This will make a most convenient combination for any teacher's practical demands.

3. Will it be necessary to use the entire series in order to get the benefit of the course?

Yes and No. A school large enough for this extended gradation of subjects would naturally take the whole, and so reap a full benefit of the plan. But smaller schools can make an election and adapt the scheme to local needs.

4. Does this new series take the place of previous publications by the Sunday-School Society, and are you intending to keep full supplies of manuals now on your catalogue?

This graded course is an addition to our resources, not a substitution. It is an enrichment, and not an obliteration of preceding works. It is simply a continuation of our regular policy. We are seeking to face forward, march on, and provide progressive helps in religious education.

5. Can any former manuals be employed in this Beacon Series?

I see nothing "hard and fast" about the situation. If special conditions seem to demand modifications, there is no reason why favorite text-books now in vogue should not be utilized. We see certain possibilities of this kind. For instance, if a school wishes a year on biographical or ethical subjects, or a year on doctrinal topics, or a year on civic duties, there is no serious obstacle to carrying this out by substitution.

6. Has the Sunday-School Society committed itself to the idea of a graded system?

The Sunday-School Society stands pledged now, as always, to any reasonable ideas. It aims to serve. It refrains from arbitrary dictation. Whatever fosters the schools and affords genuine help it encourages. The varied publications already put out prove this. It is idle to try to run all schools in one mould. We seek to support earnest, intelligent efforts in all parts of our denomination, and the spirit is the chief thing, the methods must be secondary. But we recognize the fact that Sunday-School work needs attention,—more revision, more thought, more system. It is not always a question of books.

7. Is there not too much Bible study in this present course?

That has been carefully considered. We think not. There never can be unanimity on this point among our people. Fundamental and continuous are the subjects involved in Bible study. Religious education roots in it. We bring collateral topics, side lights, historical and civic illustrations. We open up a world-wide range of view, while trying to be logically, ethically, and philosophically correct.

Edward A. Horton.

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Unitarian National Conference Car from New York.

It is proposed that a special car be secured for delegates and friends from New York and vicinity proposing to attend the National Unitarian Conference, in September; and the Secretary of the Conference, Rev. Geo. H. Badger, 104 East 20th Street will be glad to receive communication from all who would like to avail themselves of this accommodation.

———o———

Man and the Doubt

By JOSEPH A. KYLE

I.

O life,
That once so much of hope,
And joy, and love to me revealed,
Oh must I break and fall,
Because with doubt my mind is filled,
When reason seeks its throne to build?

II.

Fond Life,
Give me new hope to live!
Men say, rejecting ancient creeds,
My father held so dear,
That Beauty, Love, and Right will flee,
And leave life a blank for me.

III.

Forsooth!
Do manhood, noble aims,
And right grow dim with God? Am I.
By doubt so low depraved,
My poisoned mind a hell has made,
To match in gloom its darkest shade?

IV.

O Love,—
Tenderest dream of life,—
Am I so harsh you need recoil?
Are pride, and hate, and gloom,
Ever to march beside me here,
False friends that make life bitter drear?

V.

O Right,—
I once so much admired,—
Beset with warring thoughts, am I
So base you too depart?
O may my feet to thee still turn,
And in thy paths their lesson learn.

VI.

Beauty,—
My Idol and my Dream,—
Kneeling before thy feet, am I
No more to crown thee Queen?

Yet fair thy praises will I sing,
And all unto thy altars bring.

VII.

For Hope,—
O Beauty, Love, and Right,—
Life's firmest friend will surely stay;
Inspiring Hope remains;—
My guide thought life supreme shall be,
Tho' stormy wild the path I see.

VIII.

Then Soul,
Fight on, let come what may;
Since man I'm born, a man I'll be;
O'er western hills assured,
Each well-fought day the setting sun
Proclaims a vict'ry,—lost or won.

Amongst Ministers.

Prof. Francis Abbot Christie of Meadville Theological School has by the authorities of Amherst College been made a doctor of divinity.

Rev. Marion F. Ham preached his farewell sermon at the First Unitarian Church in Dallas, Tex., on June 27, thus closing a pastorate that has lasted five years. He expects to be absent from the church and the parish for many months, if not permanently. The membership has grown greatly in the period of his ministry here, and, besides the attendance of his friends in the parish, many from other churches or of no church affiliation came to testify to their regret at his departure.

Notes from the Field

Naples, Me. Under the continued direction of Rev. George M. Bodge of West Roxbury, Summer Service continues at Naples Me., where now the Summer Hotels and cottages are fast filling with their visitors. Rev. George F. Pratt, of Dorchester preaches on July 11th Mr. Bodge, the next three Sundays, and Rev. A. W. Littlefield of Brookline for the four last Sundays in August.

First Cong. Soc'y Detroit, Mich. Rev. Reed Stuart Minister Rev. Reed Stuart has said farewell to the people to whom he has ministered for twenty-three years. Mr. Stuart, accompanied by his wife will soon go to Italy, where he will devote himself to study preparatory to the writing which he intends to undertake now that he is freed from other cares. The farewell reception was given by the people of the church. In the course of exercises which preceded the reception Mr. Stuart expressed deep appreciation of the loyalty and friendliness with which his work has been supported. When he came to a general review of his life as a preacher, and to an expression of his hopes for the future of the church, he made a striking comparison between the church of his boyhood in Virginia and the city church of to-day. "I remember," he said in part, "when I was a young man in the country, and I remember when I began my work in the ministry,—in the Presbyterian Church,—there never was any debate on Sunday morning about going to church. They went. And this I know, too, that a preacher felt, because of this feeling of his people, that when he entered his pulpit he really had a message of importance to deliver. I delivered those young sermons in weakness, but I felt a certain satisfaction in delivering a message, which I knew would be heard in a devout spirit. Churches then were for spiritual uplift; and, while the pastor called upon the sick and visited those in affliction, he was mainly expected to preach—the preaching was the important thing. While I have no criticism to offer of the work of other churches, I have been feeling for several years that I am not equal to the work of the modern institutional church,—the church which believes in free soup, in boys' clubs and basketball, and in cadets carrying guns in the name of Christ. These things are necessary, perhaps, in the modern church. So if this work is to be done, I have felt that it must be done by others. In the fall you must select a new pastor, and we must all rally round him and give him support, as you have given it to me. And if the work to be undertaken is this modern institutional work, which

I have felt my inablity t o do then let us help him in that work and build up the church." The *Detroit Free Press* expresses editorially the regret with which his resignation has been received by the people of the community. It declares that he has demonstrated how much lasting good can be done by the man of true worth who ignores sensationalism, and adds: "He commanded something deeper than admiration from those who knew him. Bigotry never found a place in his character. He was incapable of harshness or bias in his judgments while presiding in the church which he has left. Placid, kindly, thoughtful, considerate, and sympathetic,he was a giant in his attainments and as a child in his tenderness."

Peoples Church, Kalamazoo, Mich. Rev. J. P. MacCarthy, Minister

The public services of the year closed on June 27 with a memorial service for Dr. Hale, but the institution and features will continue during the vacation. The year has been a good one along all lines of church work. Our membership has increased by eighteen. The minister has not been absent from his pulpit for a single service during the year. Evening services were held during December, January and February One series on "The Good in Discredited Lives," which included J. Rousseau, James Bradlaugh, Thomas Paine, and Robert Ingersoll, attracted unusual attention and patronage. The Women's Society (Alliance) has held two meetings each month with literary programs, also several sales and suppers. The results financially are $547. A part of this was used to recarpet the church parlors. A very fine reception under the auspices of the Women's Society was given at Easter in honor of the minister's wife, Mrs. Elizabeth R. MacCarthy, who was about to leave for Europe for a three months' vacation. The Unity Society has held well-attended religious services each Sunday evening during the year and an "Open Forum" (lecture) once each month. The Sunday-school has done good constructive work during the year. It has observed the usual "Days," culminating in the annual picnic at beautiful Gull Lake on June 29. Our school is one of the chapters of the National Cribside Association and contributes $25 per year to help maintain a free bed for children in Bronson Hospital. A Men's League has been organized. It has given one very successful dinner and has plans for some literary work next year. The church is well represented in the general life of the city. One of its members is the president of the City Commerical Club. Four other members, including the minister, are directors of the same. The church has already elected delegates to the National Conference at Chicago. The minister will attend the Harvard Summer School of Theology and supply in two New England churches during July.

New Books

Religion and Life: Chapel Addresses by Members of the Faculty of the Meadville Theological School, Boston. Sherman, French and Company. pp. 274. $1.10 net.

President Southworth,in his address on "The Choice of a Vocation," alludes to one current idea of a school of theology as being a place where a company of young men, well stocked with piety, though deficient in vitality and devoid of interest in mundane affairs, come together to be instructed by a group of aged men in certain mysteries which may in the distant past have had some human interest, but which long ago ceased to have any connection with the world in which we live." As if to disclaim the application any such conception to the school for which they labor, the faculty of the Meadville Theological school have joined together in the publication of this attractive volume, bearing the significant title "Religion and Life." Ten contributors, the entire teaching staff of the school, furnish sixteen representative addresses, delivered at the Wednesday evening services in the school chapel. The preface describes the authors as "men who are exempt from every dogmatic constraint imposed by institutions, and are accustomed to shape and to utter their convictions in the atmosphere of a chartered freedom." It is worth our while to know, in view of the prevalent belief that the interests of religion as a guide and stay in life can be protected only by some form of spiritual tyranny, what may be the tone of mind of men who teach religion and the theory of religion, or theology, unrestrained by any power but that of reason and conscience. From this point of view the volume before us is both instructive and reassuring, and we hope that it may have a wide circulation.

In bringing these utterances together for

publication, the desire has been, not to present in theoretical completeness the conclusions to which the authors have come in their several departments of learning; but rather, to quote again from the felicitous prefatory note, "to evidence the present tone and spirit of this school of devout study." That spirit, as here evidenced, may be described as one of positive, rational, humane faith in God and in all men. The constructive tone of the book is especially noteworthy in view of the slight expectation that certain sections of the religious world would have of anything constructive in religion proceeding from a Unitarian environment. Also of positive significance is the marked absence of fighting over again the battles of the past. These teachers and thinkers are too much occupied with the immediate application of religion to life to slay once more the already many times slain doctrines and superstitions of a former age. Their message is one for the present hour, colored by a worthy reverence for the past, and by the healthy optimism of a sane forward look into the future.

The volume opens with a discriminating discourse on "Intellectual Virtue" by Professor Nicholas Paine Gilman, in which open-mindedness toward the truth, and sanity and balance in its expression,are admirably commended to the reader. Professor Gilman's other contribution is a judicious and, incidentally, a learned discussion of a subject much to the fore just now,—"A Social Gospel." The author protests against confusing this gospel with the dubious program of Socialism, and offers reasons for thinking that Jesus' teaching will not bear the interpretation put upon it as socialistic and wholly of this world, by some prophets of radical reconstruction of the existing orders. Human nature is the principle factor in any social gospel, and one that is too much overlooked by such rapid theorizers. The whole discussion is most enlightening. Professor Francis A. Christie contributes two addresses, on "The Joy of Religion," and "Jesus' Doctrine of Salvation, " in which a fine religious sense mingles with a high idealism to suggest motives for more consecrated and faithful living out of the great verities that make up our Christian heritage. What the old and sadly abused idea of salvation might mean if taken as simply connoting a great, controlling purpose in our life, the one supreme purpose as Jesus expressed it, of being perfect in a perfect society of spirits, with God over all,—this is set before us by Professor Christie with a thrilling force of conviction and with the fullest grasp of spiritual problems.

The minister of the Meadville church, who also serves as instructor at the Theological School, Rev. William H. Fish, adds to the volume as his contribution two well thought out sermons in which ancient notions are set in the larger light of today. "The True Atonement" is described as the reconciling of thespirit of man to the spirit of God, through the mediation of Jesus or of any noble life; and "Retribution Here and Hereafter" is shown to be only the inevitable reaping of what we have sown, modified by the beneficent mercy of One who is not Judge so much as Father. Two closely related sermons on "The Family of God" and The Servile Life and Filial Life" are the contribution of Professor Clayton R. Bowen. The model of the family is shown to have prevailed not only in the mind of Jesus but, where it is not so often looked for in the mind of Paul, as that according to which we are to shape our conceptions and our lives, in relation to God and to our fellow-men. Professor Henry Preserved Smith, in his addresses on "The Prophet's Function" and "Jesus the Fulfillment,"brings out a wealth of meaning in the ideas of the Old Testament and their evolution into those of the New which embraced, but did not supersede, the older dispensation.

Mr. Walter C. Green, the Librarian of the School, presents "A Definition of Religion," in the form of illuminating comment on a famous definition by Professor Harnack. Dr. George L. Cary and Professor Henry H. Barber, now retired from active service but still keenly interested in the life of the School, each contribute a characteristic production, the former an address on the "Universality of the Religious Sentiment," full of serene faith and lofty aspiration, and the other a sermon on "Promise and Fulfillment" in which the vision from the summit of the yea 's exceeds in enthusiastic expectation of good even the careless optimism of youth. In all the addresses mentioned there are passages deserving of quotation and thoughts on which the mind lingers long. Not the least striking trait of the volume is its saturation with Biblical language and imagery, as well as with much of the best in modern prose and poetry.

Mention has been reserved until last of the

contributions of the President of the School, and of the Professor of Philosophy. President Franklin C. Southworth, in "The Choice of a Vocation," sets before young men the attractions of the ministry as a worthy and rewarding career, whose note is that of human and divine service. Professor Frank C. Doan makes what to the present reviewer is the most stricking contribution in the whole volume, in two passionately earnest and deeply mystical utterances of his thought of God, entitled "The Present God" and "The Invisible Humanity of God." These utterances may impress some readers as revolutionary, but they only take up into full realization and expression that thought of God as Father and therefore as kin of men, his finite children which was the spontaneous imagery of Jesus, but which has had hitherto in Christendom more lip-service than actual living acceptance. Professor Doan believes with all the force of his nature in the humanness of God. God is to him not the last link in a chain of logical reasoning, but an all compassing and all penetrating experience, and he here works out, in almost lyrical language, the possible meaning of that overmastering experience for personal and social life. Liberal theology has been notoriously weak and uncertain in its thought of God; it has retreated, behind beautiful and poetical phrases about Him, but as a living and formative force in the world it has largely ignored His existence. Professor Doan conceives of God as intensely present and practical in a man's daily life, and it will be surprising if his readers do not find new emotional and spiritual power coming into their conviction of the divine presence and especially the divine meaning and purpose in our seemingly erratic and drifting human existence.

Richard W. Boynton.

The Apparent Contradictions of Jesus. Gilbert K. Chesterton in the *Hibbert Journal for July.*

If I take it for granted (as most modern people do) that Jesus of Nazareth was one of the ordinary teachers of men, then I find Him splendid and suggestive indeed, but full of riddles and outrageous demands, by no means so workable and everyday an adviser as many heathens and many Jesuits. But if I put myself hypothetically into the other attitude, the case becomes curiously arresting and even thrilling. If I say, "Suppose the Divine did really walk and talk upon the earth, what should we be likely to think of it?" then the foundations of my mind are moved. So far as I can form any conjecture, I think we should see in such a being exactly the perplexities that we see in the central figure of the Gospels: I think he would seem to us extreme and violent; because he would see some further development in virtue which would be for us untried. I think he would seem to us to contradict himself; because looking down on life like a map he would see a connection between things which to us are disconnected. I think, however, that he would always ring true to our own sense of right, but ring (so to speak) too loud and too clear. He would be too good, but never too bad for us: "Be ye perfect." I think there would be, in the nature of things, some tragic collision between him and the humanity he had created, culminating in something that would be at once a crime and an expiation. I think he would be blamed as a hard prophet for dragging down the haughty, and blamed also as a weak sentimentalist for loving the things that cling in corners, children or beggars. I think, in short, that he would give us a sensation that he was turning all our standards upside down, and yet also a sensation that he had undeniably put them the right way up. So, if I had been a Greek sage or an Arab poet before Christ, I should have figured to myself, in a dream, what would actually happen if this earth bore secretly somewhere the father of gods and men. In the abstract, it may be that it is still only a dream. Between those who think it a dream and those who do not is to be waged the great war of our future in which all these frivolities will be forgotten. But among those who call it a dream I have not met many who call it a small dream; and very few indeed who, in reading its tremendous record, have been chiefly struck by its limitations.

The July Hibbert

A considerable percentage of the contributors to the *Hibbert Journal* for July are new to that periodical, but only because the editorial policy of the *Hibbert* is world wide, both in its inclusiveness and in its search for desirable material. Three leading scholars of continental Europe figure in the current issue,—Weinel of Germany, who presents a remarkable

picture of the present state of religious life and thought in his own country; Eerdmans of Holland, who speaks authoritatively on "A New Development in Old Testament Criticism' emphasizing the new point of view which should be assumed in Old Testament interpretation; and Monet of France, who contributes an article in French entitled "Le Culte Des Saints Dans L'Islam Au Maghreb."

Sir Reginald Hart, one of the most distinguished soldiers in the British army, lays stress upon the strength in war that lies in moral force, while Gilbert K. Chesterton makes a brilliant reply to Mr. Roberts's article in the January *Hibbert* entitled "Jesus or Christ?" He writes with his characteristic keenness and fervor, and brings the shafts of his wit and irony pointblank against his opponent.

Professor John Dewey of Columbia University, in the form of a conversation of a remarkably intellectual quality, discusses various phases of the broad subject, "Is Nature Good?" during which many philosophical sidelights are shed on an intricate question. The problem of the will is discussed under the title of "Choice" by F. C. S. Schiller of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, while the "Confusion of Pragmatism" is an analytical and philosophical exposition of certain phases of the new philosophy by Professor George Trumball Ladd of Yale University.

"Atomic Theories and Modern Physics," by the Professor of Physics in the University of Cincinnati, Louis T. More, shows the metes and bounds within which modern science should be content to work, while indicating through the writer's sharp-cut and precise exposition what a remarkable field modern physics itself is.

Professor W. B. Smith of Tulane University discusses "Kant's Transcendental Aesthetic in the Light of Modern Mathematics." This unusually rich number closes with the Discussions and Review, and Bibliography of Recent Books and Articles,—of a philosophical religious and ethical character.

Reform in Old Testament Criticism. Prof. B. D. Eerdmans of the University of Leiden in the July *Hibbert Journal.*

We have only to look at results of the recent critical inquiries of scholars belonging to the school of Graf-Kuenen-Wellhausen in order to see that a thorough application of the critical theories leads to highly improbable results. Words, half-verses, quarters, eighth and sixteenth parts of verses, belonging to different sources, are combined in the most various ways. The number of the Jahvistic and Elohistic writers has lately been steadily increasing; the characters of several alphabets are needed for designating the intricate combinations the numerous redactors have been able to make. A single word very often is sufficient argument for ascribing part of a verse to a different writer, even if it appears only a few times in Old Testament literature. The analysis of the sources is carried out to the bitter end. By the acuteness of scholars, contradictions and parallels are discovered in chapters and verses of the most harmless and harmonious appearance. Former critics studied the texts with their own eyes, now critics seem to use microscopes.

I wish not to be misunderstood. These remarks do not deny the necessity of a critical inquiry about the origin of the books of the Old Testament. What I wish to emphasize is that present Old Testament criticism has to reform itself.

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V. We stand for a progressive theology conditioned on faith in a progressive revelation. We stand for an interpretation of God and God's method of revelation, of the nature of Man, and future destiny, that shall constantly square with the latest teaching of science and largest attainments of human society in ethical ideal and spiritual vision.